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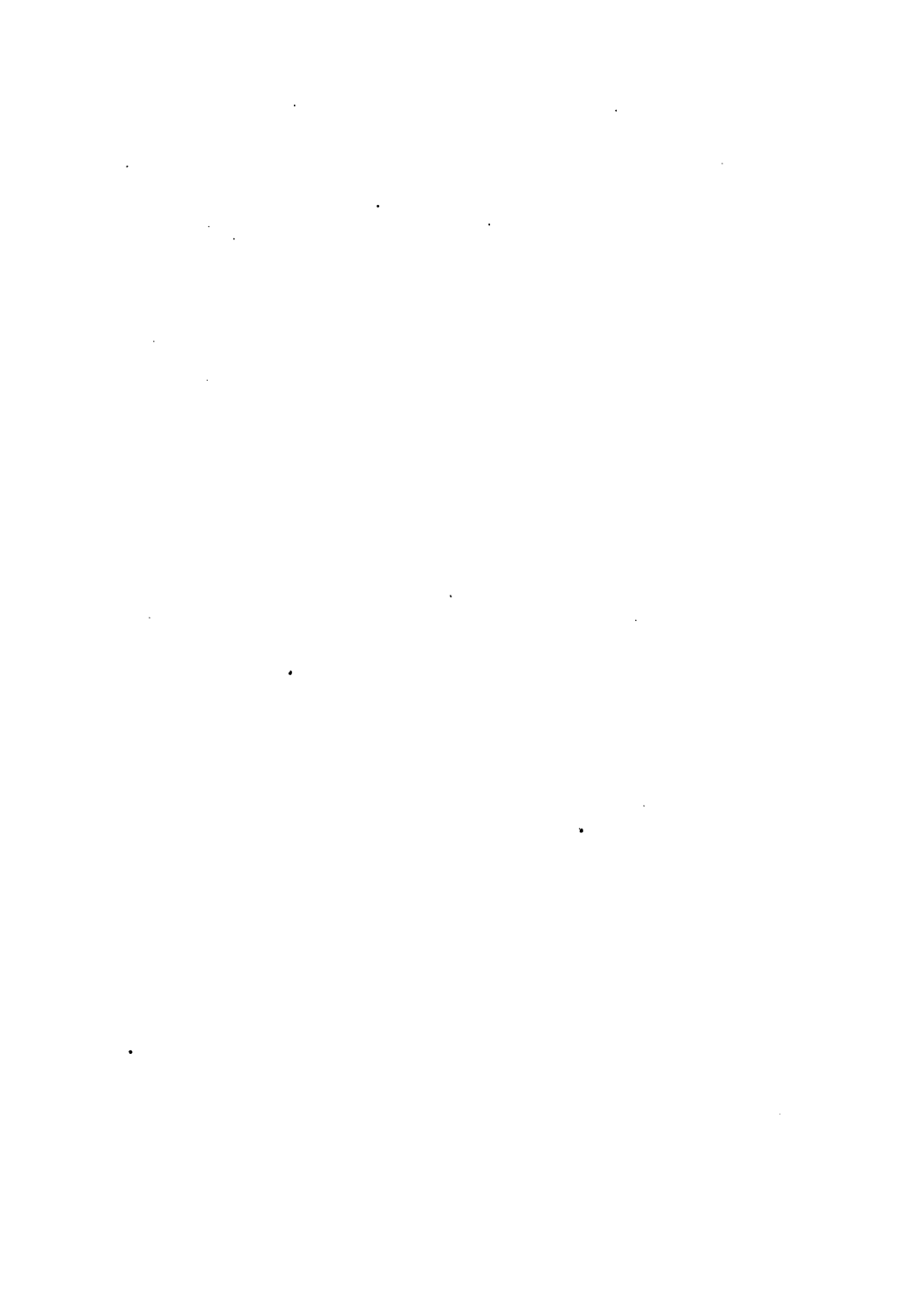
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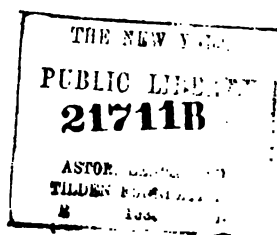
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THE CAMPION DIAMONDS

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THE CAMPION DIAMONDS

I

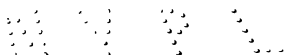
THE MYSTERY

"FORTY-FIVE to-day! These birthdays will be the death of me yet," thought Henry Campion with a humorous sigh as he plodded through the muddy streets toward his own elegant mansion on a height in Los Angeles.

In the days of his frost-nipped boyhood "back East," the Campion family had been too poor and too busy to pay much regard to anniversaries of any sort; and Henry found now as his own birthdays followed one another faster and faster, with the whirring speed of a weaver's shuttle, that he was growing averse to hearing them mentioned. The effect of birthdays — like that of certain drugs — is "cumulative," and must naturally appall his beautiful wife, his junior by nearly twenty years.

"People tell me I don't look my age, and certainly I don't feel it. I'm not forty-five! 'Nothing is so false as facts, except figures.'"

Unfortunately at this very moment in turning a corner he met a man he had not seen since his mining days, who exclaimed with startling frankness:



"Hello, Campion, is that you? Well, we do grow aged! I'm seventy and you must be well on to sixty; but see here, you can beat me on gray hair!"

At the same time triumphantly sweeping off his hat of "buzz-saw" straw and exposing a tolerable expanse of bare crown surrounded by a thick fringe of tawny, faded hair.

It was the younger man's private opinion that one might as well be gray as bald; yet for all that the random shaft of the old miner had struck home, and Mr. Campion walked on reflecting sombrely, "'Well on to sixty!' I wouldn't have liked Doy to hear that!" Doy was his wife, called in full formality Dorothy. "Poor child, there's a long desert of years between us, but thus far I seem to have made her happy. How she danced on Christmas Eve when she saw the diamonds!"

His face wore a reminiscent smile, and he patted affectionately his left breast-pocket which contained a jewel-case. He had had all the diamonds engraved on the setting with the monogram "D. L. C.," and was taking them home for her approval.

"She is sure to be pleased. Bundy spared no pains; wouldn't trust his own engraver, but had the design made by the artist Kelsey."

It was raining again as he entered his own



grounds and passed on up the walk lined with orange and lemon trees dripping and fragrant.

Mist hid "Old Baldy" mountain and softened the outlines of the Spanish adobe houses in the nearer distance. The various roses on the lawn drank healths to their neighbors with graceful nods, and vied with the pinks of all shades in pouring libations of ready sweetness on the air.

"The marguerites haven't much to say for themselves in the way of odor, but they hold their own pretty well against the shower," thought Mr. Champion. "I never got accustomed to their having those trunks as thick as your arm; for our Yankee daisies always grow scattering. But it's an advantage to have a good main stalk to cling to. I like marguerites, they are such sociable flowers; they remind me of 'the desolate set in families,'" added the happy Benedict with a thoughtful smile. "Am I growing sentimental in my old age, and did Chaucer hit it right when he said, 'Who may not be a fole, gyf that he lofe'? Well, sentiment aside, there's not another garden in the city so luxuriant as ours or so tastefully planned, perhaps because I have 'put so much feeling into it,' as the artists say of a picture.

"But I must get in out of the rain and see what Doy has to say to the monogram."

As he walked up the stone steps and touched the electric bell he heard the sound of merry

voices, and recalled the fact that a guest was to dine with them this evening, John Reynolds.

"So the diamonds will have to wait. I certainly shan't parade them before John."

Mr. Campion felt much pity for all Doy's old suitors, particularly this young "newspaper man," so poor that he ought never to have thought seriously of taking a wife. The great-hearted millionaire would no more have displayed the diamonds before John than he would have struck him in the face.

"Good evening, dear; so glad to see you," said young Mrs. Campion, meeting her husband at the parlor door.

Her voice was a sweet mezzo-soprano, of itself dower enough for any woman, but Nature had also lavished upon her the gift of unusual beauty. She linked her arm in that of her husband and drew him along into the parlor.

"Here's Jack Reynolds, but he's in a perverse mood and won't tell us a word of news. Saving it all for his newspapers, don't you think, Adelaide?"

Miss Adelaide Hilton was sure of it, she said. She was a young-lady cousin who had been the family guest for the past three months.

"So now, Henry dear, exalt yourself into the chair of wisdom," pursued Mrs. Campion, gently pushing him into his large easy-chair, "and tell us what is going on in the world."

"But the world is so wide," he laughed, "where shall I begin?"

"Suppose you try California," suggested Mr. Reynolds.

"Very well, we're right in the midst of the rainy season."

"Hush, Henry Campion; we called for news."

"We've been told before that it is raining," supplemented Miss Hilton, shaking her head at the oracle. "That is the very reason why we are shut up in the house and perfectly famishing for information from outside."

"Then if it will relieve your minds to know it, the posters say Tia Juana is under water and there has been a washout in Temecula Cañon."

"How interesting!" cried Mrs. Campion, springing up. "Houses floating, men stalking about on stilts. But there's the dinner-bell. Give Adelaide your arm, Henry, and I'll go down with Jack. We've had the offer of a new cook, Jack. Our old one, Gar, is going back to China, and he gives us the choice of two of his acquaintances. 'Chinaman thirty-five dollars, Chinaman loves Jesus, forty dollars.' Now, which would you take?"

"I think I'd risk the cheaper one, the heathen Chinees," said the facetious Mr. Reynolds, "for I'm told that Christianity interferes sadly with Celestial cookery. The fellows read their Bibles, you see,

while they're getting breakfast, and the combination is often very confusing."

"Jack, you're incorrigible. There, you hear what he says, Henry? Take the heathen Chinese. But I suppose there's no need of deciding till after we get home."

"You're not going away?"

"Why, to be sure. Hadn't you heard? We go to Chicago next week — Henry and I — if the floods permit."

And she broke forth in a ripple of music:

" 'To give room for wandering is it
That the world was made so wide.' "

"Which reminds me, Henry," she added, as they seated themselves at table, "that you ought to attend to that little errand I charged you with."

He knew perfectly well what she meant, though he asked "What errand?" at the same time taking up a spoonful of soup and putting it back in his plate untasted.

"Why, the monogram, you dear, unconscious, trying creature. You're so forgetful." Here she improvised a pretty frown and pout. "We all have our faults, and yours is forgetfulness. If you had my memory, Henry, you'd be perfect."

At this juncture Miss Adelaide Hilton suddenly applied her napkin to her lips. The idea of Doy's having a good memory was irresistibly amusing.

"Yes, Henry, I've been afraid you would neglect it. Not that a few days are of any consequence, only one doesn't like to be hurried at the last; and besides, you know, we shall both feel safer about the diamonds when they are marked."

Mr. Reynolds stole an inquiring glance at Miss Hilton, who said at once:

"Dorothy had a full set of diamonds at Christmas. When you see her with them on you'll say she's perfectly irresistible."

"As if she needed adorning! But when she wears them, Miss Hilton, send for me, will you? I wouldn't miss that vision. I have a weakness for diamonds."

"Here they are, then," returned Mr. Campion, taking the case from his pocket and presenting it to Mr. Reynolds as indifferently as one hands a car-fare to a conductor.

Mr. Reynolds thought the acting was overdone. He could only exclaim, "Superb! Magnificent!" as he opened the case and caught the white light of a necklace, a bracelet, a brooch, and a ring.

"And I, poor I, could hardly have afforded her a string of wampum," thought the newspaper man with a pang which was partly regret and partly envy. Why had Henry Campion succeeded in everything, "a man of small calibre, but immense bore," so John Reynolds characterized him.

Himself a pet of society, a diner-out, he under-

rated his host, a man of large all-around sense, but with no conversation. Just so the squirrel looked down upon the mountain because the mountain could not crack a nut.

"Do you all approve of the lettering?" asked Mr. Campion, forgetting to appear nonchalant. "I hope it will suit you, Doy. At any rate, Bundy has done his best."

The monogram was closely inspected by the whole party and pronounced perfect.

"That is, as monograms go," commented Mr. Reynolds. "Of course, no man alive could make out the letters unless he knew them beforehand."

"D. L. C., for Dorothy Luce Campion. Why, I'm sure that's plain enough," said Adelaide Hilton.

"Yes; or it might be D. C. L., for Doctor of Civil Law; *that* is equally plain." After dinner as his hostess glittered in all the bravery of the jewels, Jack had many pretty speeches to make about her eyes, lips, and hair, and the new lustre which the diamonds threw upon sapphire, ruby, and gold.

"It is far and away the finest set of diamonds I have ever seen," he admitted generously.

Meanwhile his thoughts ran thus: "The newspapers give us sometimes in obituary notices the causes of death; why do they never give us in marriage notices the causes of marriage? It would be vastly more entertaining. For example:

‘After a lingering flirtation, Henry Campion to Dorothy Luce. He was rich — the greatest catch there was; she was beautiful — he fell in love. “Love is a whim of the eyes.” No cards.’”

It is just possible that John, as a rejected suitor, was not an impartial judge in this case. It is by no means certain that Dorothy Luce had married from mercenary motives; at any rate we will give the pretty creature the benefit of the doubt. She was a little spoiled and flighty, yet it had always been observed that the bias of her nature inclined her to like steady, reliable people. Her cousin Adelaide believed that Doy really appreciated Henry Campion’s high character, and knew the worth of his devoted affection.

“There, I’ll take it all back, Henry, what I said about your forgetfulness. But won’t it be a responsibility to get these diamonds safely to Chicago?”

Mr. Campion looked at his wife in surprise.

“Why, Doy, we can’t think of it! I’ll lock them in my safe in the bank.”

“Now, Henry, the idea! That’s so like a man! Put my new seal-skin cloak and my velvet gown in the bank, too, — they’ll be safer! Now, you know I’m dying to show the diamonds to mamma and the rest of the people. Don’t I want them to know what a dear, foolish husband I have?” said she, lifting her lovely flower-face with a smile

which seemed to him "richer than a whole argosy of pearls."

"Besides, there's not the slightest danger, I'm so absurdly, ridiculously careful! I never lose anything, do I, Adelaide, — unless, now and then, a pair of gloves?"

"But, my dear, the care of such things on a journey," remonstrated her husband.

"There, Henry, don't growl in that polar manner. If you'd only let me speak; but you all talk so much! I was going to say, I have a chatelaine bag with a chain like the Atlantic cable. Really you couldn't tear it from my girdle any more than you could uproot Polyphemus."

Mr. Campion smiled, Mr. Reynolds laughed, Miss Hilton coughed delicately.

"There it is — you all talk me down, you all combine against me. But the more you say the more my mind is concentrated upon the determination. I must take them to show to mamma, and if you think the bag could be cut off the chain — was that your idea? — then I'll have them in some safer place. I'm sure it's a worthy motive. Think how pleased mamma will be!"

She looked around appealingly. Not one of the group responded. Then the spoiled child in her arose and asserted itself. When had Dorothy Luce ever failed to have her own way? That supercilious look on Jack's face was more than she

could bear. What did he mean? What did they all mean? Would they insinuate that she lacked judgment, she, Mrs. Henry Campion, a matron of more than a year's standing, a society leader?

She defied them to their faces; she would show them that she lacked neither discretion nor courage. All at once her very abidance upon the earth seemed to depend on her taking the diamonds home to her mother.

"Cousin Henry," said Adelaide Hilton, desiring to turn the conversation into a pleasanter channel, "do you go through Dodge City and Newton and Atchison on your way to Chicago?"

"Yes, I think we shall take that route; why do you ask?"

"Then you will see two of our Maine boys, — Oosoola boys, — that's all. I just happened to think of it. One is baggage-master, so James Lawrence writes me, and the other is conductor. James and I went to school with them both."

"You told me Amos Upjohn was a conductor, that handsome Amos who made James so jealous," said Dorothy mischievously. "I shall be glad to meet him."

Adelaide blushed vividly.

"Amos Upjohn is strikingly handsome, as you'll certainly admit. And the baggage-master on that route is Dick Kincaid, too homely to live, but as good as gold."

"Homely people are always good," asserted Dorothy. "Perhaps Amos Upjohn being very handsome is bad, and that is why you refused to marry him."

"Fie, Dorothy. Amos Upjohn is an excellent person; and if you should recognize him by his resemblance to Edwin Booth I wish you'd speak to him and give him my regards."

"Her conscience troubles her about that fellow," thought Mrs. Campion watching her cousin's face.

"And cousin Henry," added Miss Hilton, "you'll be sure to know Dick Kincaid by his remarkable ugliness. If you have to talk to him about your baggage, please shake hands with him for me; I don't forget old friends."

"I'll bear it in mind," replied Mr. Campion; and upon that the subject was dismissed without further thought.

"I wish you both a delightful journey," remarked Mr. Reynolds on taking his leave that evening.

"Thank you," said Mrs. Campion, her whole figure expressive of a fixed resolve.

She was not without a definite conviction of her own foolishness; she knew she ought to be ashamed of herself, but would have borne thumb-screws before she would have confessed it. Were not the jewels her very own? If she wished to carry them

over her husband's veto, he would allow it without another word; that was Henry's way.

"Come and dine with us four weeks from to-night, Jack. We shall be at home by that time, and I'll tell you what my friends have to say about the diamonds."

Mr. Reynolds came to dinner at the time appointed; he had a memory for engagements. Moreover, he was not above finding pleasure in the thought of seeing Dorothy Campion in the depths of self-abasement.

"Good evening, Jack," said she, meeting him with a limp hand and a joyless face. "I little thought I should have Job's tidings for you to-night; but you know it all, the papers are full of it. If you came to triumph over me, you may go right home."

"I only came to say how sorry I am, Doy, and that I don't give it up yet. The diamonds will come back to you sometime; the monogram will identify them."

"A monogram in the Choctaw language! But sit down, Jack; Job wants his three friends around him to hear his lamentations, for his grief is very great," said Mrs. Campion with a pathetic attempt at a smile.

"The three friends of Job sat on the ground, I believe, but we will make a compromise," said

Miss Hilton, offering Mr. Reynolds a chair, while Mrs. Campion seated herself at her husband's feet and laid both hands impressively upon his arm.

"I admit that the monogram is Choctaw if you will; but it would prevent the thief from daring to sell the diamonds," said Jack, speaking in his rôle of comforter. "Let me see, Doy, it was at Newton, Kansas, that you first missed them?"

"Yes, the morning we reached — I mean the morning *I* reached Newton. You know Henry was not with me. One of those impertinent, unfeeling despatches had called him away the night before, and I was all alone."

"Yes, I know."

"Let me tell it, dear, if there is anything more that ought to be told," said Mr. Campion, coming to the rescue.

"Now, Henry, you needn't be so tender of me and try to spare me! I'm the one at fault, and I must bear the burden and the penalty," said pale, sorrowful Doy, with a catch in her voice. "But you know, Jack, what I say is confidential; you promise not to put it under big head-lines in any of those gossiping newspapers?"

"Certainly, Doy. I never yet betrayed my friends," said Jack proudly. "But don't torture yourself by going over all the harrowing particulars; I don't ask it."

"I ought to be tortured. I'll not shrink from

it. I shouldn't have taken the diamonds with me and I knew it; it was the imp of the perverse that urged me on. And Henry has been so good — not a word of reproach, nothing but pity for me from first to last. Oh, Henry Campion, if you could have a dozen divorces from me you deserve them all — on the ground of idiocy ! ”

“ So I was an idiot for marrying you ? ”

“ I didn't mean *that* ! — Yes, but you were, though. I couldn't have been the idiot, sir ! I knew enough to marry *you* ! ”

“ But I can't tell to this day, Jack, how I lost those diamonds, or what I did that was wrong. They were in the jewel-case and I never lost sight of the case for a moment. ”

“ As you look back upon that night, Doy, is there any person whose appearance struck you as in the least suspicious ? ”

“ Why, I suspected them all : every passenger and every train-hand, from the conductor down to the candy-boys. I thought they were all after those jewels. ”

“ Was the conductor the handsome man Miss Hilton alluded to ? ”

“ Yes ; but after Henry left I was afraid to speak to him. He looked decidedly melancholy. Oh, our Addie has been a sad flirt in her day ! ”

“ And the baggage-master ? ”

“ He's comically ugly. Henry talked to him. ”

I didn't see him afterwards. I never stirred hand or foot, Jack, from the time Henry went off till bed-time."

"Would I had been there to see!" Mr. Reynolds could not help exclaiming. "Dorothy Campion perfectly motionless must have been a novel spectacle."

"Hush, Jack, or I shall stop right here. You asked me about suspicious-looking people. Now, Henry, you remember that woman on the train whom I disliked? We were with her a whole day. You know how she spent hours in the toilet-room, and I told you I thought she was in there painting her face. She had a complexion like these wax figures in shop-windows, if you fancy that sort; I don't."

"But what could that have to do with the diamonds?" asked Mr. Reynolds.

"I don't know; but people rake up just such evidence; it's always done. It's no crime for a lady to paint her face, but you don't respect her quite so much. You said that yourself, you know you did, Henry."

"And did you altogether like that intellectual gentleman with the brown, curling mustache; the one that looked at me so much? Not that you would suspect him of a crime; but it did seem to me a rudeness when he came and spoke to me after you left, though it was only about raising the

blind. You know I'm so particular about strangers, and I was very dignified certainly — wouldn't even own that the sun had set clear.

"He got off before we reached Newton, and I don't quite know whether I had the diamonds then or not, for I was asleep. We had to wait ever so long — hours, I think — for a herd of buffaloes to cross the track, and I didn't close my eyes before daylight, I felt such a terrible responsibility. I'm perfectly sure I didn't leave that jewel-case under the pillow when I went into the toilet-room to dress my hair, for I had the wildest suspicions of the porter.

"But that painted lady — well, I don't know positively that she was painted; if not 'twas a good imitation, — that lady didn't mean to let me in at all. She kept me waiting and waiting.

"And possibly it was while I waited and walked back and forth, feeling so outraged and indignant with her for acting as if she owned the whole palace car. Oh, I don't know how it was or when it was — and the sun not fairly risen either; but it might have been about that time. I find I have a lying memory when I'm excited and frightened. I'll not defend my memory any more.

"But whether the wax woman had got those jewels in hiding or whether she hadn't, she was responsible for my losing them, I say it deliberately. She left the car first — I hope she'd had time to

dress! I scrambled on my clothes, and had just missed the jewel-case when I saw her walking on ahead of me. I longed to cry out, 'Stop, thief!' only that wouldn't have been allowable, and besides she was met by friends who helped her off in a carriage. And there was I left without a single friend, tearing my hair on the platform."

"So it is your opinion that this lady was the thief?"

"Why, I've no opinion, Jack, none whatever. I only know somebody on that train was the thief, and I've tried to tell you the truth so far as I know it."

"The truth topsy-turvy," thought Jack; but he looked sympathetic, and was silent.

"The conductor was a gentleman. I hadn't the faintest idea what to do, but he advised me to stay right there in Newton, and he would send a despatch for Henry. Henry came as soon as he could. It seemed forever, and then everybody was searched, though that was a mere farce, for there had been time enough to hide a whole jewelry store; and that porter! Oh, why should I single him out just because he was black?

"But all the while my thoughts had been going out to James Lawrence, of Kansas City. You know, Jack, he is an excellent lawyer."

Here Mrs. Campion looked at her cousin, who

thought proper to drop her eyes. It was well known that James Lawrence was her betrothed.

"Yes, Lawrence is making quite a reputation," said Mr. Reynolds.

"And I was so anxious to see him that Henry indulged me; but when James came, if you'll believe it, Jack, he wouldn't undertake the case! I did feel aggrieved."

"He referred us to Mr. Field, another lawyer," explained Mr. Campion; "it was more in Mr. Field's line, he said."

"I don't wonder Lawrence felt some diffidence," said Jack. "With such a total abstinence (as you may say) of evidence, the case looks tough. Did you put detectives on the track?"

"Of course."

"And then kept on to Chicago?"

"Yes," said Doy; "and mamma was like Henry, saying and doing her best to comfort me. Papa was good, too, but said, 'This came of being head-strong.' A little hard, papa was. Not that I blame him. Now, Jack, I've finished my lamentation, only adding, in the words of Burns:

" 'What I ha'e done for lack o' wit
I never, never can reca'.' "

Henceforth no jewels for me. I give them to Henry's keeping. All but my wedding ring.

"There, now, let's find something less brilliant

to talk about than diamonds. — By the way," she added, as they went down to dinner, "we're going to try that Christian Chinee."

Jack shrugged his shoulders.

"To be sure Sing High may mix Bible and breakfast; if so, we'll try to swallow the compound. Henry says it's a religious duty to take him, and that settles it."

Jack bit his lip.

"But I have faith in Sing High, for Henry has looked him over and likes him; Henry has excellent judgment."

Jack pondered long on Dorothy's unwonted meekness, and concluded that the loss of the diamonds had proved to her, as to her husband, 'an overthrow worth many victories'

Mr. Reynolds was so interested in the missing diamonds that he called again the next week. He found Mr. Campion and Miss Hilton deep in a game of chess, but looking in better spirits than on his last visit.

"Have you any news for me?" he asked.

Before there was time for a reply the door opened softly and Mrs. Campion swept in, smiling joyfully and shimmering with diamonds.

"'Angels and ministers of grace defend us!'" exclaimed Jack, dropping on one knee before the radiant vision. "Tell me what this means."

"It means that I'm the happiest woman living. Here they are," touching the jewels, "but where they came from nobody knows. We thought the losing of them was a deep mystery, but the finding of them is a deeper mystery yet, fathoms deeper."

"But you must know where you got them? Had they found their way into the hands of the Israelites?"

"You mean the pawn-brokers? I can't say. Henry had a despatch, the very night you were here, from James Lawrence, dated Dodge City. 'Important business,' it said. He went in the night. James Lawrence was there to meet him, with that homely baggage-master; and it seems James had been 'working up the case,' as you call it, for all he had said he wouldn't touch it."

"I knew all the time James would help you if he could," struck in Miss Hilton eagerly.

"Well, Jack, I must break off to say there had just been an accident on the Newton road. *Did* that have anything to do with it, Henry? I never read such things in the papers; but, *of course*, it couldn't. Only you were sent for so soon afterwards. It is absurd to think it had the least connection with the diamonds. What kind of an accident was it?"

"It was what might be termed a lucky accident," replied Mr. Campion. "Merely two cars telescoped."

"Maybe it did good then; maybe it shook those diamonds out of some hiding-place. Anyway, James and this Dick Kincaid had them in their possession."

"That was odd, — go on."

"And they said they would give them up to Henry if he would promise to ask no questions."

"I enjoy that," cried Jack; "the cool impudence of it is beyond anything. And James Lawrence was a party to it, you say? Well, Campion, did you take the booty on those terms?"

"It was the only chance. I wanted the diamonds."

"But he didn't get the jewel-case or the chate-laine," said Dorothy. "Wasn't that just a little queer?"

"What sort of looking man was this one with Lawrence — this baggage-master?"

"Ugly as sin," was the brief reply.

"Did he have an honest face?"

"Now, I can tell you all about that!" exclaimed Miss Hilton, who had been trying for some time to wedge the thin edge of a word into the conversation. "I told you Dick was an old schoolmate of James's and mine back in Maine; a remarkably good fellow — I can vouch for him. He is no more capable of taking those diamonds than you are, Mr. Reynolds."

"Singular; grows more so. What motive had he, this baggage-master, for secrecy?"

"He didn't assign any motive," rejoined Mr. Campion; "merely said he couldn't and shouldn't tell where he got the diamonds."

"And Lawrence was equally reticent, was he?"

"They were in league together; what one said the other swore to."

"So you got no satisfaction out of them? No clew to the thief whatever?"

"I told you I entered into bonds to ask no questions," said Mr. Campion; but as he spoke he looked at his wife and did not meet Jack's questioning gaze.

"There was some ambiguity in that reply," thought the observant Mr. Reynolds. "Is Campion keeping anything back?"

"Henry is just as curious as we are," vociferated Doy, "only, of course, he had to keep his word; and now how shall we ever get at the truth?"

"Perhaps from James," said Miss Hilton. "I've just written him and begged him to tell me."

"It will do no good," returned Mr. Campion.

"Now, don't be so sure, dear," rejoined his wife, "James is coming here in April; and if Addie doesn't make him tell, then I shall! Am I going to be trifled with in my own house, Henry Campion?"

"And do you know, the more I think of it the more it seems as if I wasn't so much to blame,

after all, about losing those diamonds, in my state of mind? I was nearly on the verge of losing my reason after Henry left me. And it must have been an accomplished thief, and he cut off my chatelaine, don't you think, Jack? Or where is it? 'Twas a mercy he didn't cut my throat at the same time."

When Mrs. Campion spoke so confidently of extracting the truth from James Lawrence, she overlooked the trivial fact that he was a lawyer pledged to secrecy. Even to Adelaide Hilton, though she besought him diligently, James would not divulge the history of the lost diamonds.

"Don't ask me, Adelaide. I would tell you if I had a right to tell. I will only say that they never would have been found but for that accident to the train."

"Now, James, you mystify me more than ever. That must have been a peculiar accident. Cousin Henry wouldn't give any particulars; he merely said it was a lucky accident."

"He was right. With all my heart, Adelaide, I thank God for that accident; it was more to me than words can ever say."

"To you personally? Then I ought to know, James."

"You shall know by and by; but it involves other people, innocent people. I hold it at present as a sacred trust."

He spoke very gravely; and after this Adelaide was wise enough to refrain from further questioning.

"I don't see how you can bear it so patiently, Addie, it is so extremely humiliating to you," said Mrs. Champion severely. "He thinks you can't be trusted to keep it from me, when you know very well I would never, never tease you to tell."

Adelaide was obliged to turn away her face.

"I never would marry a reticent man like that, Addie Hilton! Depend upon it there can be no happiness in married life without perfect confidence."

"But other people's secrets, Dorothy!"

"It makes no difference, Adelaide, not the slightest. A man who truly loves his wife will trust her like his own soul."

"Do you fancy Henry Champion trusts you in that way? If he were in James's place would he break his word and tell you about the diamonds?"

"It would not be breaking his word, child! Don't you know that Henry and I are one, absolutely and indivisibly one?"

"It amuses me, Dorothy Luce, to see how you idealize that man."

"I don't idealize him and don't need to. I simply recognize what is there. And more and more ever since he treated me so generously after I proved myself an idiot. Oh, Addie, he's the best man in the world!"

"Then James is the second best; he's 'a poor thing, but mine own,'" quoted Miss Hilton with an arch smile; "and I can't throw him away, even if he does show some conscience about keeping his word; I shall have to forgive him."

After her marriage with Mr. Lawrence there was much visiting back and forth between the Lawrences of Kansas City and the Campions of Los Angeles; but as no light was ever thrown upon the jewelled mystery, Mrs. Campion gradually ceased to feel curious about it; and the time came when she accepted the inevitable and wore the diamonds with smiling complacency.

II

THE BAGGAGE MASTER'S STORY

It chanced in the course of years that the truth was discovered by the merest accident; and, of all places in the world, on a little island off the Atlantic coast.

Our old friend, Mr. Reynolds, rather jaded by editorial work on a large newspaper in New York, had gone to the wilds of Maine to whip the streams for fish. The fish proving too knowing and coy, he had finally gravitated towards Zelic Island, arriving there one evening in a threatening north-east wind, the only guest the boat had brought for the Zelic House.

He knew he should find comfortable quarters, the landlord, Mr. Dick Kincaid, being locally celebrated for lavish hospitality as well as for unique ugliness.

"Dick Kincaid? Why is that name so familiar to me?" thought the new arrival, eying the landlord keenly.

His upper teeth shut over the under ones like a cross-bill; his coarse sandy hair bristled aggressively above beetling brows; and, as a finishing touch, his nondescript nose bore a large defiant wart at the tip.

“ ‘Ugly as sin’ ! It comes back to me now. I’ve run across him in my note-book for years : the baggage-master, too homely to live, that was mixed up with the recovery of Dorothy’s diamonds, Dick Kincaid ! There can’t be two of him looking like this. ”

As John Reynolds walked into the hall under the archway of caribou antlers, the landlord exclaimed heartily, as to a long-expected friend :

“ Walk right into the parlor ; glad to see you, but we didn’t calculate on greeting you with a nor’easter. ”

Here, as a bewildered pedestrian appeared at the door to inquire the way to Dr. Peck’s, Mr. Kincaid broke off to direct him :

“ Walk up a piece *on me*, then take the first turn to the left, ” — walking “ on me ” meaning, of course, in island vernacular “ walking on my land ; ” so closely do these farmers associate themselves with their farms.

“ Poor fellow ! ” went on the kindly image of ugliness, as he shut out the pedestrian and followed his guest into the parlor. “ Poor fellow ! Got a sick grandmother ; pretty tough to be hunting up a doctor such a night as this ; it’s just beginning to pour. ”

The rain was coming down in a diagonal torrent. It was not yet five o’clock, but the windows looking toward the ocean were so darkened that the

mainland was a blurred outline, and nothing could be clearly discerned but the revolving lamp of Seguin Light in the distance.

"I count myself lucky to have reached this good shelter," said Mr. Reynolds, spreading his hands to the open fire. "Will the rain last long, do you think?"

"Well, no; when a storm begins butt end foremost like this, it's apt to clear off inside of eight hours. That's what we say here, but inland where you hail from — Great Scot! when I was baggage-master out on the prairies" —

"I beg your pardon," broke in Mr. Reynolds; "but as you were once employed as baggage-master in the Middle West I would like to ask if you ever knew Judge Lawrence, of Kansas City?"

"Know him? Judge Lawrence?" cried Dick Kincaid, springing up and grasping the hand of the stranger in delighted surprise. "You don't say, though, that James has got to be judge! Well, that's just like him," a beautiful smile irradiating his discordant features. "And so you know James Lawrence! Do tell me about him! He was an Oosoola boy, married an Oosoola girl. Doing well, I'll be bound. Any children?"

"I'll tell you all I know; that is," added John Reynolds with professional shrewdness, "I'll tell you if you'll tell me in return the story of those Campion diamonds."

"Campion? What's that? A new kind?" asked Mr. Kincaid, with the blankest look his expressive face could assume. "I never wear jewelry; wife says it's not becoming to my style; shouldn't know a diamond from a brass nail.

"But you and James Lawrence together knew enough to restore a set of valuable diamonds to Henry Campion of California."

"Well, well, that's so; but how came you to hear of it?"

"Everybody heard of it—'twas all over the West; but nobody knew where you found them, Mr. Kincaid."

"We didn't want it known; there were good reasons—at the time."

"But that was long ago. Do those reasons exist now? I've not the slightest personal interest in the matter, Mr. Kincaid, but I confess to a keen curiosity."

"Let me think a minute. You registered from New York, I believe?"

"Yes; but I call myself a Chicago man."

"Oh, you do? 'Way off in Chicago? Well, then," returned Mr. Kincaid after a little reflection with one eye closed, "I can't see at this late day what harm 'twould do to tell you the story, and I guess I shall just about have time before supper, if you'll excuse my talking so loud in this racket of wind.

"It happened 'most twenty years ago, that trouble about Campion's diamonds, but it's as fresh to me as if 'twas yesterday. Here, sonny," turning to a little boy of seven who had stolen in and stood by his chair, a child so beautiful that he seemed like an angel astray rather than the offspring of such a father. "Look here, sonny, you go out and ask mummer if she can't make some Welsh rabbit for supper? And you stand over her and help her make it, the way you did the other night, so she won't forget the mustard. Welsh rabbit is nothing, in my opinion, without the mustard.

"There, we've got *him* out of the way," pursued the landlord as the small feet pattered across the hall. "I wouldn't have the little shaver round while I'm telling this story.

"There were three of us Oosoola boys knowing to the history of those diamonds. Queer, wasn't it, seeing they got lost out there in Kansas? You've heard of us three boys from Oosoola, Maine, — Amos Upjohn, James Lawrence, and me? Ugh, how the wind blows! Here, sit up a little nearer the fire and we'll have on a fresh maple stick.

"Yes, we all went to school together back there in Oosoola, in the old red school-house by the river. Little we dreamed then that we should ever be figuring away in any such jewelry muddle off in Kansas.

“Ame and Jim were about of an age, but there wasn’t much love lost between them. Amos was jealous of Jim. If Jim wanted to take a girl to spelling-school or a sleigh-riding, why, that was the very girl Ame wanted to take, and he wouldn’t be suited with any other. And ’twas generally Addie Hilton that they both aimed for. I was a good deal younger, but I could see how it was. I liked Jim, you’d naturally suppose I would, for you’re acquainted with him and know his ways. He was good to the small boys and the boys that needed friends.

“Ame was of a different make; he was rather lordly. If you stepped up before him and got a chance at the stove, you had to answer for it, I promise you. At recess you’d find yourself in a snow-drift, likely as any way.

“A well-meaning, handsome boy, nothing bad about him. Ame was a good scholar, stood well with the teachers, and his father was a deacon. It was a likely family. My mother did washing for ’em. I’m not ashamed to own it. My mother was an up-and-coming kind of a woman, and we were poor, and the deacon’s wife helped us out, many’s the time, and took her pay when convenient, in washing. You’ll see my mother, come supper-time. I’m proud of her, God bless her!

“Well, Amos Upjohn was the first of our school-boys to drift off out West. They said he

didn't think Addie Hilton had treated him right. Maybe she hadn't. Girls will be girls, especially pretty girls, and Addie Hilton was something of a cokwet. I used to notice myself, young as I was, how she smiled right and left on the boys.

"About the time Amos went off, she seemed quite taken up with James Lawrence. There was a good deal said, and some pitied Amos, and some didn't. Anyway, they all agreed he was a proud fellow, and wouldn't break his heart over it. Amos could always be trusted to look out for himself.

"It wasn't long before James Lawrence went to Bangor to study law. He used to come home pretty often, and he and Addie Hilton owned to being engaged. But Jim wasn't ready to marry yet awhile, and next I knew had gone West and put out his shingle somewhere in Kansas, the very state where I calculated to go as soon as I was old enough.

"There was quite a move toward Kansas in those days. Folks thought they could get land for a'most nothing—rich land too; and the Maine boys were sick of staying round home delving on the old farms, when they could better themselves by moving. They had reason to change their minds afterwards; but we won't touch on that now.

"As soon as I could get mother's consent, I

started for Kansas myself. I didn't know exactly where James Lawrence was, but hoped to fall in with him somewhere.

"I went to Atchison, and got a chance after a while as baggage-master from Atchison to Dodge City. As luck would have it, who should come along about that time but Amos Upjohn, and set up as conductor on the same road. I didn't like that over-well, and hadn't any reason to, that I know of.

"Amos was a tall, splendid-looking fellow, with eyes as black as water-melon seeds, and black hair that curled round his forehead, and he had quite the air of a gentleman. If I had been in Addie Hilton's place, I think I couldn't have helped falling in love with him out of hand, though I might have been sorry for it afterwards; there's no knowing in such cases.

"He hadn't forgotten old times back East, and by the way he talked of Jim Lawrence, I saw he held a grudge. As for Addie Hilton, he never mentioned her, one way or another. He seemed kind of morose; hadn't improved a mite in that respect, and used more bad language to me than was called for.

"There was no settlement at that time west of Newton.

"Why, sonny, you back again? Did you watch her put in the mustard? Are you sure? Well,

now, you don't s'pose your mummer and your grammer will both go and forget to make a clam chowder? You like clam chowder, don't you, Mr. Reynolds? Well, then, you'll like ours. It isn't what you get at city hotels, where the clams only have a passing acquaintance with the scalded skim milk. I mean the real article: chopped clams, clam-juice, crackers, cream, and potatoes.

"Yes, Freddy, the gentleman wants some; you go and tell 'em so, and tell 'em to wash the clams in th-r-e-e waters; and don't you come back till you see it done, and the cream skimmed, and onions peeled, and all in the kettle.

"There, that will keep him away some time.

"As I was saying, there was no settlement at that time west of Newton. It was a pretty wild sort of road, some of it not even dug out, but the sleepers laid along on the grass. Sometimes a herd of buffaloes would cross the track and we had to stop for them. They didn't mind us any more than if we'd been a handful of grass-hoppers. It was our lookout to get out of the way, not theirs, and if we ran into them we had the worst of it, for we were obliged to wait for the whole herd to move on, and maybe 'twould take an hour. You've seen the thing many a time? Yes, I thought so, you being a Western man. But wasn't it a grand sight, particularly on a moonlight night? You know they looked larger

then than they did by daylight. They were always moving south, you remember?

"It was the winter of '74, not long before the 'big storm,' so called, that Mrs. Campion had occasion to go from Dodge City to Newton. Yes, you know more about it than I do. Her husband was with her going to Chicago, or somewhere, but he was called away by a telegram, and she had to go through with us alone in the night.

"About as pretty a woman as ever I set eyes on. You couldn't help watching her, she had such quick, pretty ways, only she was dreadfully cut up at having to travel alone. They hadn't allowed her to do it much, I suppose, and no wonder — they ought not to, such a perfect little beauty.

"She was very modest-appearing, without any flummery. You never would have thought of her as one of the grandees if you hadn't happened to see the name on the trunks. There was where the trouble began, I suppose, — that name on the trunks, and then her fingering her bag so much that she carried on her belt.

"People looked at her. It was generally known that Henry Campion was a multi-millionaire. He travelled a good deal, and most of the railroad hands knew him by sight, and they all pitied that little wife, and hated to see her so

scared. She was in constant motion, like the leaves of the popple-tree. I think now she was actually terrorized, so to speak, and didn't really know what she was about.

"This bag I spoke of was in her hands some of the time, they said, and some of the time on her belt. She claimed she never put it down a minute, but, bless you! that wasn't true. She had it under her pillow all night—at any rate that was one of the stories she told afterwards. Her stories didn't hold together worth a cent.

"About half an hour before we got to Newton she was dressing in the toilet-room, and I saw a man standing close to her berth. I didn't think anything of it at the time. Folks can stand *anywhere* and you don't call 'em to account for it.

"When we got to Newton the bag was gone, and she was about crazy. She stayed in Newton and sent for her husband, and when he got there he did his best, but there was no getting at the facts of the case.

"Mrs. Campion testified to what was in the missing bag, and her husband backed her up. Diamonds: a bracelet, a necklace, a bosom-pin, and a ring. Worth enough, somebody said, to set every man in Dodge City up in business and found a hospital into the bargain.

"All hands on the train were searched. Mr. Campion was very polite about it and tried to save

our feelings, but it had to be done, and we submitted without a complaint.

“‘But I’ve been sure from the first,’ said Campion, ‘that the bag was stolen by one of the passengers; and if that is the case the thief may be in Arizona by this time.’

“He showed us a fac-simile in wax of the monogram that was on all the jewels, and we saw and heard so much of it that we should have known it in the dark — C. O. D. No, you’re right, D. C. L. — it had slipped my mind. We were sure of one thing: it wouldn’t be safe for the thief to try to sell those jewels, they’d been too well advertised.

“You may know it had stirred up a great excitement through the state, and of course all our hands on the road felt a little uncomfortable. We had all been searched, but that proved nothing; one of us might have secreted the plunder, you know. Upjohn said he shouldn’t rest till the thief was discovered.

“Upjohn had a piercing black eye, but I wasn’t afraid to meet it as the others were. We had been boys together, and I was innocent, and Upjohn knew I was innocent. We hadn’t any great liking for each other, but we both knew an Oosoola boy wouldn’t steal, and if it should ever come to one of us being suspected of such a crime — which the Lord forbid! — I would have

stood up for Upjohn to my last breath, and never doubted but he would have done the same by me.

"Time went on — a week, maybe a month — and no news from the Campion diamonds, though we hadn't forgotten them, you may be sure.

"One day I heard Burgess, the mail agent, remark to somebody that Lawyer Lawrence would be on the train that night, meaning our Jim. I hadn't seen Jim all this time since I came to Kansas; he had been on our train once, but I had missed him, being sick and off duty. He was getting to be considerably talked about as a good criminal lawyer. I didn't know whether he was married or not. I didn't get much news from home, but I thought he would post me and I should enjoy a chat with him, even if he was a great man and I only a train-hand.

"So I watched for him that evening and saw him as he stepped up on the platform, but I never let on that I knew him. I waited for him to speak first.

"'Why, Dick Kincaid, is that you? How are you, old fellow?' says he, with a hearty slap on the shoulder and one of his old hand-shakes, as if he'd never let go.

"That was Jim all over. He had his faults; we're none of us perfect; and I didn't much like his taking so to criminal cases; but when it came

to greeting old friends, Jim's heart was in the right place.

"I watch'd him and Amos when they met, having Addie Hilton in mind, and thinking they would have her in mind too, and would naturally show a little embarrassment. They didn't, or if they did 'twasn't noticeable. Jim was cordial enough — no reason why he shouldn't be, considering he had come off first best in the courtship affair. Amos was deferential and a little stiff, still he seemed friendly; talked some time, and urged Jim to put on his overcoat again that he had just taken off.

" 'We're going to have what my old father used to call a trimmer of a cold night,' said Amos. 'You'll wish yourself in warmer quarters before morning, if there's anything in the signs of the sky.'

"And he was right. It had been snowing all day, but growing colder right along. We left Dodge City at nine that evening, and it snowed till ten, then began to blow. Great Scot, how it blew! We ought to have got into Newton about three in the morning, but had no snow-plow — 'twas a great oversight. We detached the engine, and poked through as well as we could. The snow was not very deep; we didn't expect any trouble.

"About four miles before we got to Atchison — that's twenty-two miles from Newton — we got

stuck in a cut through a hill. Our engine being detached from the train had frozen up, and we couldn't use her. You know the water that runs from the tenders into the boilers is apt to freeze in winter when the pump is not in motion.

"We thought we should have to thaw out the engine; there was no other way; so we undertook it—the conductor, two brakemen, the fireman, the engineer, and I. We all tried to get the engine back to the cars to thaw her out, but we couldn't get her there anyway; it blew too much snow. After we'd shovelled quite a spell, Upjohn found 'twas no use, and gave up. I remember just the way he spoke, though probably I shouldn't have thought of it again if things had turned out different.

" 'This is a beastly climate,' said he. 'I don't care if I never take another train down this road. Keep on shovelling if you've a mind to; I've had enough of it.'

"Upon that he dropped his shovel with an oath, and made for the mail-car.

"I worked away awhile longer, then got discouraged myself; it did not appear to be any use working against such odds,—the snow blowing on to the track faster than we could get it off,—so I followed Upjohn into the mail-room, which was in the middle of the baggage-car. The baggage-car was divided into three compartments:

baggage at one end, express at the other, mail in the middle.

"Upjohn was talking to Burgess, the mail-agent, about something private and particular; I saw that, and knew I was interrupting, but I broke right in, and said I:

" 'Mr. Upjohn, isn't it about time for our freight train to be along?'

"The freight didn't go with us, it followed about three hours behind. It went twenty miles an hour and we went twenty-five; but as we were continually stopping, whereas the freight kept right on, the time on the road was very near the same.

"But you see this was something we hadn't counted on — this dead halt. Probably the freight was jogging along just as usual, and here were we, not so very far ahead of her, and stuck fast! What if she should hit us in the rear?

"I didn't know whether Upjohn had been thinking of it or not; 'twas his business to think of it. When I spoke he took out his watch. 'Yes,' says he, 'the freight will be here in twenty minutes. Go out and tell a brakeman to stop her.'

"That was easy enough, no trouble about that. I went out to obey orders, but as I was leaving the car I heard Upjohn say in a low tone to Burgess, as if 'twas part of the conversation I had broken in upon:

"“Yes, it does look dark against him. I’m told there are officers at Newton waiting to search him, only the storm’s so bad there’s no knowing when we’ll get in.”

"“To search *him*’? And who’s him? thought I. I knew in a minute that ’twas the Campion jewels, and somebody was on the track for them; but I didn’t understand Upjohn’s being so shady about it. Why didn’t he want me to know?

"But I kept on about my business, I hadn’t much time to speculate on jewelry. I caught up with a brakeman, and called out to him to stir lively. He must hurry back and stop the freight or she might run into us.

"He had two torpedoes on his lantern, — all hands carry ’em on Western trains, or anyway they used to, — and this fellow — his name was Bob — walked back half a mile and clinched one of these torpedoes under the track, so the engineer of the freight train would hear it when the wheels went over it, and know something was wrong. An engineer has mighty sharp ears: no matter what a racket his engine is making he can hear the least little noise outside of that, if it’s no more than the rattling of a screw. So we felt perfectly safe.

"But somehow the engineer of the freight didn’t take the slightest notice of that torpedo when it went off with a loud crack. He kept right on with the train just as if nothing had happened.

"Bob didn't know what to make of it. There was hardly time for another torpedo, but he had got to rouse the engineer somehow, and all he could do was to swing his lantern and yell.

"He swung and he yelled; he had a voice like a wildcat; but the engineer never slowed up a particle; the freight kept right on till she got so near Bob that Bob actually had to jump off the track and let her go by.

"All this while we folks just ahead in the blockade had been hearing the racket, but hadn't felt the slightest concern; we simply thought the brakeman was stopping the freight and it was all right.

"I was in the mail-room myself, thinking over what I had heard Upjohn say about officers being on the scent waiting for us at Newton, and the more I thought of it the queerer it seemed that Upjohn hadn't wanted me to hear. Why was it, unless the officers were after a man I knew? And all at once it occurred to me:

"What if Amos meant Jim Lawrence? Ame is a deep fellow. I never understood him, but he can't be enough of a devil to want to hurt Jim!"

"No, there was no sense in it. I couldn't think what had put it in my head.

"Ame was sitting close to the little barrel coal-stove, his brows knit into a scowl; the mail-agent was lying asleep on his berth over the counter. I recollect how that counter looked,

running the whole length of the room, with the mail-bags hanging from it on hooks. I recollect how quiet and easy we took it till I said to the conductor, starting up quick as I spoke:

“ ‘Seems to me, Upjohn, I hear that freight!’ ”

“But Ame made no answer; seemed as if he didn't take the sense of what I said; but he must have heard; he wasn't asleep.

“I ran for the rear door and heard some one shout:

“ ‘She's coming!’ ”

“ ‘Hurry, Upjohn, wake up Burgess!’ I cried.

“I saw a light on the snow. I could hear shouting in the passenger cars. Till then I hadn't been really afraid — 'twas so unreasonable that the freight train should run into us after she'd been warned.

“I turned my head and called out again to the conductor:

“ ‘She's coming!’ ”

“Then I gave a leap into the snow. None too soon. Just that minute the freight struck the passenger coach behind us, split right through it, pushed the baggage-car against the engine, and jammed the partitions together; then squeezed up the mail-room into half its original compass. We knew there were two men in the mail-room — Upjohn and Burgess. We heard a scream. One of them was alive; it was Burgess. He was in

his bunk, and the bunk was bumped into a perfect box; we had to chop him out from the top. There was a ventilator over his bunk, and that was what saved him. He had been asleep.

“As for Upjohn, it was generally thought he must have been asleep too, or he would have got out; he had had plenty of time. But there he was, jammed up against that box-stove, crushed to death!

“Everybody else was alive and well; even Burgess wasn't hurt to speak of. The passengers had all been on the alert, and had seen this coming for some time, and most of them had left the cars before the freight struck.

“But while we were talking about it, and feeling so horrified over the conductor's fate, the baggage-car took fire from the stove, and in five minutes was ablaze.

“We managed to remove Upjohn's body, and then as soon as we could put out the fire — which was slow business, having only snow to work with — we carried the body — Jim and I — to the next station, about half a mile. We had offers of help, but it seemed as if we Oosoola boys were the ones to do it.

“Jim said we'd better send for a coroner; and two men started for one. There were folks enough round, and they were kind and didn't mean to shirk, but I couldn't help noticing how they all

drew off from James and me when we got to the station, and we had one corner to ourselves — and Upjohn.

“It was pretty solemn business waiting there in that wild night for the coroner. Jim wiped his eyes, and said to me in a husky voice:

“‘I’ve been hearing stories about Amos’s gambling, but I don’t believe they’re true, and I wish I had met him more cordially. He has softened a good deal in his manners. I never saw him so friendly as he was to-night. I was quite touched by his thoughtfulness in making me put on my overcoat.’

“I naturally looked at Jim’s overcoat as he spoke. It was a handsome one, and he had turned up the collar over his ears to keep out the snow. We were right under the blaze of a reflector-lamp, and I happened to see that the collar was ripped a little on the under side that was turned up. I might not have noticed it at any other time, much less mentioned it; but we stood there feeling so down-hearted that it was kind of a relief to say something trifling, so I said:

“‘Your collar is ripped a little.’

“‘Is that so?’ returned James; ‘strange, for I bought the coat only last week.’

“‘Oh, it’s nothing worth speaking of,’ said I, and put up my hand to it to pick off a thread. ‘It must have got caught on a nail — no, there’s

a little bunch inside — tailor's bees-wax, likely enough.'

"Upon that Jim pulled off the coat. The bunch was quite far in. He put in his forefinger and poked for it, and after working awhile fished out something that appeared to be a button sewed up in a piece of black cloth.

" 'I've no use for that,' he muttered, and was for throwing it under the stove, but I took it out of his hand, thinking I'd investigate with my jack-knife and see what it was.

"When I had cut it out of the cloth it turned out to be — you would never guess — a splendid diamond bosom-pin about the size of a nickel.

" 'Hello, what's this?' cried Jim. 'How did it come in my collar?'

"I turned it over in my hand and saw that there was lettering on the under side of the setting. I shouldn't have guessed what the letters were if we hadn't been drilled on that fac-simile; but I knew at once 'twas the Campion monogram.

"When Jim asked I had to tell, but I saw next minute he knew as well as I did; you see he had been drilled too.

" 'But where did it come from? How could it have got inside my collar, the collar of my new overcoat?'

"I set my teeth together. I couldn't answer

him a word. We stood and looked at each other, maybe a minute; and then we looked at that crushed body lying across two chairs.

"‘Could you have believed it of him?’ said Jim.

"And that was all that was said.

"The coroner came, and we helped him off with Amos's clothes. You may believe it gave us a mixture of feelings, for we hadn't proceeded far before we found there was something sewed into the inside garments. It was a sheepskin bag containing the rest of the jewels: a bracelet, necklace, and ring, all with the Campion monogram. Probably he had stolen them from under Mrs. Campion's pillow at the very time I saw him standing by her berth.

"No, I *hadn't* told of that; it wasn't necessary. I hadn't dreamed he was guilty. He was Deacon Upjohn's son, our own town's boy, you see, and why should I want to cast a blight on him, just because he happened to be standing in one place instead of another?

"But there was no chance now for misapprehension or mistake. Amos was the thief!

"And worse than that, he had been plotting to get James Lawrence arrested for his own crime!

"It was no use now to smooth things over or hold things back. I spoke right out before the coroner, and said to Jim:

“‘Jim,’ said I, ‘we don’t want to believe it, but we’ve got to!’

“‘That’s so, Dick. He stole the diamonds, and I suppose he didn’t know where else to put them for safe keeping, so carried them in his clothes. They must have been a great care and worry to him on account of the monogram.’

“‘Yes,’ said I, ‘and it was while you and I were talking together that he put that pin in your coat-collar. It was a good scheme, he thought, but he was afraid you might find it out, and it made him uneasy. That was why he left the passenger car and stayed off in the baggage-room.’

“‘I believe you,’ said Jim, ‘only how could he have gone to sleep with such a dreadful weight on his mind?’

“‘He wasn’t asleep, he was in a brown study and forgot to watch out and save himself.’

“‘If that was so, the plot cost him his life. The Lord have mercy on his soul!’

“Jim was shaking all over in a kind of nervous ague, for there was something grim and awful about this.

“Then he turned to the coroner and said in a low tone, — we were off in a corner by ourselves, but we wanted to be very careful not to attract attention, — he said low to the coroner:

“‘This poor misguided fellow was the only son of a widow, all she had left of five children. Let

us hush up his crimes, coroner, for his mother's sake.'

"The coroner wiped his eyes and agreed to it, in case we could make all straight about the jewels. Jim undertook to manage that. We telegraphed Mr. Campion to come post-haste on important business; and then the coroner and Jim and I struck hands on it that we'd make Campion keep it out of the newspapers, so that widowed mother off in Oosoola never should know.

"Mr. Campion arrived in the quickest possible time, and we offered to hand over the jewels if he would ask no questions. He was so surprised and pleased to get them back that he made no objection to the terms, only bowed and said:

"'Thank you, gentlemen. I know James Lawrence never would bind me in this way unless he had good reasons.'

"So it was hushed up, and Widow Upjohn thought to her last day that her son Amos died doing his duty.

"You see the newspapers didn't say he was absent-minded and forgetful, and they didn't say the engineer of the freight train was sound asleep; it wouldn't do to make such things public. No, it sounded better to say, 'What a signal mercy that there was so little loss of life!'

"But there was another signal mercy that wasn't taken into account. Nobody knew what a lucky

accident it was for Jim. What if the cars had got through to Newton all right and he had run into the officer's arms with that breast-pin wedged into his coat-collar? Would they have believed him on oath that he didn't put it there himself?

"No, as you say, Mr. Reynolds, circumstantial evidence is a mighty hard thing to get over, and the best kind of a good name won't count for much when you're found with stolen goods on your person.

"So I won't pretend I ever mourned for Amos Upjohn. How a boy brought up like him could have sunk so low I can't understand; but 'twas well he was caught in his own trap, for 'twas the saving of Jim.

"Jim and I looked up his effects, and it didn't take us long to find there was nothing left to send home to his poor mother but a lot of big debts. It was then that Jim concluded to tell Campion the whole story; and 'twas well he did, for Campion's heart went right out to the widow, and he pensioned her off for the rest of her days, though of course she never mistrusted where the money came from. I handled the checks myself. I don't know but she thought it was from somebody Amos had helped — 'dear Amos.' And I held my tongue like a hypocrite. Why, when she got the money every three months she and some of the other old ladies used to hold prayer-meetings over it; how

should they know it was a reward for stealing diamonds?

"Sister Upjohn — a saint she was — lived in peace and plenty to a good old age, and blessed Campion — 'my kind benefactor,' she called him — not an hour before she died.

"I want you to tell Campion this when you see him again; and tell him I'm glad he's alive, and glad there are a few more like him; it sort of evens things up and helps reconcile you to the awful wickedness of this world.

"Oh, here you are again, sonny. Is supper ready? You've timed it just right, for we've talked ourselves hungry. I hope you stood over mummer faithfully, for this gentleman comes from New York, and we want him to say he never sat down to a meal East or West that began to compare with what he found on Dick Kincaid's table at the Zelig House."

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